DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 360 437 UD 029 378

AUTHOR	Borman, Kathryn M.
TITLE	Overwhelmed in Cincinnati: Urban Appalachian Children and Youth. Draft.
INSTITUTION	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	6 Feb 92
CONTRACT	433J47000702
NOTE	62p.; Version of a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (Cincinnati, OH, August 23, 1991).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Children; Cultural Differences; *Disadvantaged Youth; Dropouts; Economically Disadvantaged; Elementary Secondary Education; Equal Opportunities (Jobs); Family Problems; *High Risk Students; Poverty; *Social Discrimination; Social Services; Social Support Groups; Summer Programs; Urban Problems; *Urban Youth
IDENTIFIERS	*Appalachian Whites; *Ohio (Cincinnati)

ABSTRACT

The issues facing urban Appalachian children and their families in Cincinnati (Ohio) are addressed. Appalachians have the highest school dropout rate in Cincinnati proportionate to their numbers, with low access to jobs and generally poor access to, and use of, public services. Much of the information for this report comes from a survey of 246 Summer Program participants (youth) in an Appalachian neighborhood. Other information is derived from recent research and personal experiences working with this population. Two particularly pressing issues are jobs and health-related concerns. Appalachians are discriminated against in the job market and neglected in health services. Examination of the elementary school and high school experiences of urban Appalachian children reveals the economic stresses these families encounter, as well as the strong cultural influences in which they develop. The life experiences of a neighborhood worker from the urban Appalachian background illustrate the difficulties these children face. Interviews with program participants gave a strong sense of the neighborhood as a supportive network with an enclave character. High school is frequently seen as dominated by an alien culture. Social services delivery systems for urban Appalachians should address needs in the neighborhoods while emphasizing personal attention and practical applications in a culturally sensitive fashion. (SLD)

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Overwhelmed in Cincinnati: Urban Appalachian Children and Youth

Kathryn M. Borman

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UD 025378

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2-6-92 draft

OVERWHELMED IN CINCINNATI: URBAN APPALACHIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Kathryn M. Borman

Introduction: An Invisible Minority

> There was no doubt that these ... [urban Appalachian] mothers cared about their sons and all the rest of the children in the family. But they were just trying to make ends meet and trying to hold themselves together, trying to meet the demands of the kids and it wasn't working. They seemed very overwhelmed. (Susan Murphy, Teacher, Cincinnati Public Schools, 1990).

> I had one kid that I was right on top of all the time and one day I met her on the street. She was pregnant and had just reached her 14th birthday before she got pregnant...We have a lot of the adolescents now and the girls have the first child when they're 13 or 14 years old. Then we have some that are 11 and 12, not too many, but we have had them. (Ernie Mynatt, social worker and urban Appalachian, 1990).

While the influx of Appalachian people from rural areas to midwestern cities following World War II was nearly as great as Irish and Italian migration in the late 19th century and in sheer numbers much greater than the current

migration of Asians to U.S. shores, urban Appalachians continue to remain a largely "invisible" minority. Internal migration, massive as these shifts may be, is not as dramatic or exotic as an influx of peoples from distant shores. Although many migrants have left the inner-city core neighborhoods in which they and their families initially settled, many have remained.

This paper addresses the issues facing urban Appalachian children and their families whose social service and educational needs require culturally sensitive structures and focus to best address their lived experiences. Such structures should be community-based, accessible, and responsive rather than centralized, remote, and bureaucratic. These issues may not be apparent to those unfamiliar with problems of rural-urban migration. They involve cultural identity, rural-urban transition, and changes in family structure and livelihood strategies -- all of which in combination create different kinds of stressors. My assumptions about intervention and support service needs for urban Appalachians living in Cincinnati are predicated upon a set of harsh realities including:

a. Appalachians have the highest school dropout rate in Cincinnati proportionate to their numbers.

b. Appalachians have been excluded from federally-funded job training and placement programs. In proportion to their presence in the eligible

population for these services, this lack of access to jobs is dramatic.

c. Appalachians in inner city neighborhoods live in the poorest housing, are often slow to take advantage of health and prevention services, have a high incidence of female headed households, teen pregnancies, and substance abuse.

In the section that follows I provide a background discussion of Appalachian migration and its impact upon the cities receiving the migrants and upon the migrants themselves. Special attention is paid to Cincinnati, the site of my 14-year research program with urban Appalachian children and youth.[1]

Background: Mountain People in Cincinnati

I've seen a cultural turnover. Way back in the late 1950s, the coal business went down on account of the oil. Coal was priced off the market and after WWII the coal miners of the mountains had to go somewhere so they flocked to the cities. They jammed the inner city and blockbusted the inner city. When these mountain people started coming across the bridge into Cincinnati, people started selling their shops and places in Over-the-Rhine and moving out and these people moved into these places. Along about the same time, you had the cotton picker and cotton setter. A

> because machinery took over the cotton fields. At the same time you had the blacks coming from the Delta. They were coming from the woods and everywhere, from Mississippi, Louisiana...landing here and wherever, mostly in Michigan. Michigan got the biggest batch of them and Chicago. When they did [migrate], they brought along cultures with them. You can go down to Laurel Homes and you have your tub outside with a fire in it, screen over the top doing your barbecuing in the evenings. You could smell barbecue all over town when they first got here. (Ernie Mynatt)

During the 1940s, a booming war-stimulated economy in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and Cincinnati drew 705,894 migrants from the Appalachian region, an area covering 497 counties across twelve states. In the 1950s, the automation of coal mining and the development of alternative fuel sources drove 1,569,000 more from the Kentucky and West Virginia coal fields. Finally, during the 1960s, an additional 592,000 streamed to the same cities that earlier waves of migrants had targeted. Tom Wagner and others who have examined the effects of this massive movement of people from rural to urban places have speculated that this huge demographic shift has gone largely unnoticed because this mass of 3,000,000 migrants were white and their migration internal to the United States. [2,3]

In 1991, while a relatively large number of first generation urban Appalachians reside in Cincinnati, many thousands more are the children and grandchildren of those who initially migrated to the city in the 1940s and 1950s. In order to profile current demographic data for urban Appalachians in the Cincinnati Metropolitan Area, I rely upon the recent work of Obermiller and Maloney. Their research provides data on age, patterns of residency, family status, education, occupation, and income for urban Appalachian and other groups.[4] I also include data from the files kept by the Urban Appalachian Council on 246 youths aged 14-21 who have been participants during the period 1988-91 in a neighborhood-based summer Youth Program designed to provide job skills for at-risk youth.

In 1980 and again in 1989, Obermiller and Maloney surveyed residents in Greater Cincinnati (Hamilton County) through the University of Cincinnati's Institute for Policy Research (IPR). On the basis of respondents' self-identification, three comparison groups were drawn to include white non-Appalachians, black non-Appalachians, and white Appalachians. The researchers estimate the latter group constitutes approximately 40 percent of the county's population.

With respect to age, the data show that for both first and second generation Appalachians the average age is substantially above that for individuals in the remaining

two groups. In 1989 the average age of blacks residing in Hamilton County was 39, while for non-Appalachian whites this figure was 43 and for Appalachians, 46 years. It should be kept in mind that these data are for first and second generation urban Appalachians only. At the more recent time (1989) of the IPR survey, 61 percent of Appalachians were women, a demographic feature the researchers attribute to the higher mortality rate of men in this aging population. Patterns of long term residency in the urban area indicate the stability of Appalachian respondents whose average length of residency was 31 years compared to 29 years for blacks and 32 years for non-Appalachian whites. Both blacks and Appalachians have clustered more heavily in the central city as opposed to the suburban fringe areas over the nine year period. Whereas 31.4 percent of the Appalachian respondents were city dwellers in 1980, by 1989, 44.4 percent lived in the city. A similar proportion of black residents also inhabit the central city, leading the researchers to conclude that the city is becoming inhabited by an overwhelmingly black and Appalachian population.[5]

Not surprisingly, given the enormous economic and occupational shifts that have occurred both locally and regionally over the last 20 years, employment growth for urban Appalachians from 1980 to 1989 was concentrated in low-level service industry jobs. As discussed at the

outset, the expansion of the service sector has paralleled the decline of manufacturing in many cities in the midwest. Thus, for urban Appalachians surveyed, the number reporting employment in sales and clerical jobs grew 14 percent as did the number of laborers and service workers (+12 percent). Declining numbers (-17 percent) reported employment as craftpersons and operatives.

These residency, household, employment, and occupational data are important in setting the context for an examination of urban Appalachian children and youth who are at-risk for failure in Cincinnati's Public Schools. They are, however, insufficient in at least two important ways. Because IPR data were collected with first- and second-generation urban Appalachians who are overwhelmingly older and less likely to have children under 18 years of age living at home, we cannot assume that the demographic information presented here generalizes to a younger group of third- and fourth-generation urban Appalachians who are more likely to be involved in child rearing and less likely to be earning the relatively higher wages of urban Appalachians who have had more labor market experience. These data are also insufficient in that they do not focus on conditions in the household, namely the actual experiences of children and youth that place them at-risk for school dysfunction and failure. These conditions will be examined in the remaining sections.

The data profiling the 246 Summer Program participants present information on the conditions of young people who live in the neighborhood of Lower Price Hill. Among these youths, 21 are either pregnant or parenting teens, the youngest a 14-year-old. Family size ranges from households consisting of one person (N=3) to households containing nine individuals (N=3). The modal household contains four family members (N=58). The average annual family income reported by these youths is $7,788. Per capita income varies with the highest average per capita income ($2,312) reported by those living in two-person households. The youths served by the Summer Program comprise approximately 50 percent of the adolescent population in the neighborhood and see themselves as both eager to and capable of bettering themselves. These urban Appalachian youths may represent the least discouraged and therefore least tough of the "tough cases" representative of this group. Nonetheless, they serve as eloquent spokespersons for this population.

Throughout the remainder of this paper I rely on voices from the community and to a lesser extent on the recent work of myself and other university-based scholars who have extremely close links to the community. In the following section, I consider two particularly pressing issues, jobs and work, and health-related concerns. I then examine life in the neighborhood for both elementary school-aged children and adolescents whose criminal records and frequent school

absence make them tough cases but whose attitudes and behaviors illustrate the strengths of this community. Finally, I consider how the school as a community-based institution can be organized and positioned to carry out its work successfully.

Work, Health, and School Dysfunction

Jobs and Work

Once they arrived in the cities, migrants followed a well documented and strategic pattern of settlement in port of entry neighborhoods. In Cincinnati, for example, migrants relied on networks of established kin to provide entry to the workplace. This livelihood strategy is consistent with patterns of cooperation and interdependence characteristic of mountaineers. Migrant workers recruited kin to jobs in the city during the manufacturing boom years resulting in the employment, according to some estimates, of as many as 70 percent Kentucky-born workers in some Cincinnati plants.[6] Settlement in Cincinnati occurred in neighborhoods such as Lower Price Hill and Over-the-Rhine adjacent to the highly industrialized Mill Creek Valley where jobs were literally within walking distance. In the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, work was in factories and small sheet metal and machine tool shops that generally required little or no experience or training.

In the 1980s and 1990s, urban Appalachian youth remain

economically marginalized. Jack, an 18-year-old dropout in the eighth grade had attempted to find work as a baker in a large and well-established chain in the city. Even though his parents and other close kin had worked for years for Busken's, Jack was not prepared for the interactional style of his flamboyant boss. The cultural codes for interacting on the job that Jack had learned in his community were not congruent with those practiced by his boss at the bakery. To add to his alienation, Jack was employed at a store in the chain outside his neighborhood on the other side of town. Separated from the community to which he was accountable, he was an outsider in this context. Jack had this to say about his experience:

> All the bakers said I was the best there. It wasn't that I wasn't catching on or that I had a lack of understanding of the work or anything like that. It was my boss. She was this lady who'd want a hug and a kiss every night... [at the beginning of the shift], and I didn't figure I was going into a job like that. I couldn't complain to the manager or the owner and tell them this stuff. Besides, she's been working there for years.

Jack quit his job after three weeks and suffered long bouts of unemployment thereafter.

In January, 1991 when I saw Jack last, he was married and he and his wife, Angie, were expecting their second

child in March. Jack and his family live in an apartment building rent free in exchange for his work as the building manager and custodian. This is an extremely comfortable arrangement for his family because they reside close to supportive kin. His in-laws and mother live within walking distance. He earns some money periodically building, renovating and remodeling houses for a small firm but occasionally finds himself applying for ADC assistance. Youths like Jack from low-income families often avoid more challenging opportunities outside their neighborhoods because such jobs disrupt important social networks of exchange among kin and peers. Such opportunities often create cultural conflicts that cannot be easily resolved. Because youths lack the experience in negotiating such conflicts, employers see youths as expendable workers.[7] Lacking mentors, role models, and sponsors, youths may continue to drift, keeping afloat with a series of odd jobs and exchange strategies.

During the 1980s, unskilled work in manufacturing jobs was increasingly scaled back due to automation and the general decline of manufacturing jobs in an increasingly service-based national economy. The result has been periodic or chronic unemployment. Thus, many third and fourth generation urban Appalachian families remain isolated and out of work.

Youths in enclaved urban Appalachian neighborhoods are

particularly vulnerable, attending schools that maintain patterns of socioeconomic segregation. Although socioeconomic status defined by parental income and education is generally a strong predictor of alienation from school reflected in the dropout rate, the relationship is by no means perfect. In Cincinnati, for example, the dropout rates of some urban Appalachian neighborhoods are even higher than their socioeconomic ranking relative to other city neighborhoods would suggest. In one such case according to 1980 census data, a relatively highly ranked neighborhood (17th of 44) in terms of socioeconomic status had the eighth highest dropout rate in the city.[8]

Discrimination persists in the current job market for urban Appalachians. In cities such as Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati with large urban Appalachian populations alongside established white groups, urban Appalachians without the benefit of middle class origins and a college education do not acquire jobs and income equal to other whites. According to a political and economic analysis of job mobility and labor market conditions, neither cultural differences nor migrant status alone or together account for this outcome. Rather, Appalachians are excluded in order to reduce the competition for jobs "reserved" for native, non-Appalachian whites.[9]

In fact, analysts have concluded that the labor market is actually segmented. One segment is the primary or

institutionalized labor market which contains well-paying jobs, a career ladder internal to the work organization, and an evaluation of performance on the job in terms of clear criteria. In contrast, positions in the secondary labor market have few advantages: jobs are low-paying; hours are irregular and/or part time; there is little or no opportunity for advancement; and, although evaluation might appear to be "objective" because of the employer's use of rating sheets, it is heavily influenced by the informal social relations between employer and employee in the work setting.[10]

There is, of course, competition for jobs in the secondary labor market especially during hard times. However, discriminatory employment patterns result in the monopolization of good jobs by middle-class workers who possess the necessary traits and behaviors assumed to be required for specific jobs and lead to the creation and maintenance of job shelters. In an appliance repair shop in Cincinnati that employed a worker in a study of the school-to-work transition that I undertook in 1983, the managers assumed that white males, preferably non-Appalachian youths who had graduated from parochial rather than vocational schools, made the best repairmen. Others were not even considered when a job opening occurred. In this organization, appliance repair jobs were reserved for established white males as were all other positions in the

firm except that of secretary, which was reserved for a white female.[8] This example illustrates the manner by which employers, although perhaps not willfully intending to harm particular groups or individuals, nonetheless, exclude them from particular jobs and workplaces.

The promise of good employment remains elusive for urban Appalachian youth whose repertoire of skills and behaviors places them at odds with employers' biases toward those who display a more "appropriate" demeanor. Employers desire docile, "responsible" workers who do not have strong obligations to kin, the problems associated with young families of their own, and whose approach to life is less spontaneous and engaged than that of many urban Appalachian and black youths. In their survey of youths in Baltimore, Providence, Cincinnati, and Detroit, McCoy and McCoy determined that of those of school age but not in school, 49.2 percent were Appalachians, 46 percent other ethnics (including Hispanic and Polish youths) and 4.7 percent were black. For the most part, Appalachians and other white ethnics had simply dropped out of school while a large minority (25 percent) of blacks had disrupted educational careers due to criminal convictions resulting in their incarceration and withdrawal from school.[11]

Health-Related Issues

Contemporary U.S. society has begun to address school

learning and behavioral difficulties in places such as New York City where the first so-called "crack babies" have now reached kindergarten age. Teachers of these children are reporting a range of learning difficulties and failures; these children experience difficulty in learning to spell their names, to attend to the teacher as a story is read, and to carry out routines such as lining up at the door. It is not clear to what extent "crack children" will present an increased burden on schools that receive them or indeed whether cities other than New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles will have large numbers of these and other children whose severe learning and behavioral disorders are associated with maternal substance abuse of an extreme nature.[12]

Although urban Appalachian children and youth in Cincinnati may not suffer effects of severely abusive maternal drug usage and early addiction themselves, there is little question that health issues coupled with community social and economic decline as suggested in the previous section combine to contribute to school dysfunction. A five-year study of hospital admissions for children from infancy to age 11 revealed the linkages among neighborhood residency, pollution, other health hazards and patterns of diagnosis.[13, 14] Records of children who resided in five predominantly urban Appalachian neighborhoods and who had been admitted and released from Children's Hospital from 1985-1990 were the central focus of the study. Information

for this group was subsequently compared to information for similarly admitted, diagnosed and discharged children between the ages of infancy (less than a year) and 11 years of age. During the period of study, 16,338 children were admitted to the hospital. Urban Appalachian children in this group numbered 2,514, while 2,691 children from predominantly black neighborhoods were also admitted.

Although admissions figures are similar for both groups, children from both age groups who reside in predominantly urban Appalachian neighborhoods are hospitalized more frequently that children from all other neighborhoods in the city for diseases classified as infectious and parasitic; diseases of the ear and mastoid process; diseases of the genitourinary system; and injuries. Further, these children suffer more recurring health problems than children of the same age groups from the city as a whole based on the frequency of their admission to Children's Hospital. Although they are hospitalized less, black children suffer more frequently than urban Appalachian children from diseases of the respiratory system, of the skin and subcutaneous tissue, congenital anomalies, injuries and poisonings.

What impact these health-related problems have upon school functioning is difficult to know. However, as school systems become increasingly oriented to evaluating the performance of students from an early point in students'

careers, it is likely that health related issues will come increasingly to play an explicit rather than tacit role in how students are tested, evaluated and classified. Indeed, in Cincinnati Public Schools today, children from low-income urban Appalachian neighborhoods have higher rates of identifiable learning problems compared to children from the city at large. While achievement scores as measured by the California Achievement Test declined as a whole for students in grades one through six, over the past five years the decline for urban Appalachian children was two to three times greater than for the district as a whole.[15]

For older urban Appalachian children and youth health related issues of other kinds predispose them to be at-risk for school dysfunction leading to school leaving. Pregnancy and early parenthood is in the forefront as Ernie Mynatt's statements suggest.

Among the 246 Summer Program youth participants aged 14-21, 21 or 12 percent were either pregnant or parenting. However, none of these individuals were among the young men and women I interviewed during the summer of 1991. The young women were particularly disdainful of their younger pregnant and parenting peers, and also expressed a lack of interest in traditional female interests. One of them remarked:

> Where I live there's [lots of guys] and about four or five girls...some of them don't come out at all

> because they're scared...[of neighborhood fights]. They aren't allowed out and so I usually hang with all the guys.

Another young woman, one who was clearly a leader among these girls, clarified her friend's statement:

> What she's trying to say is that you can do more with the guys...[general snickering] not sex-wise ...but you can hang out more with them and do what they do. Girls just want to fix their hair and stuff, but guys just want to get down and party, and play football and stuff.

Perhaps because of their participation in the Summer Program, these young women had clear ideas about their future work plans and maintained a firm resolve to avoid early pregnancy and parenthood. All desired to pursue occupational careers that required at least two years of college attendance. In contrast, young women whose interests are more traditionally feminine may be more likely to see pregnancy as attractive, particularly when the neighborhood offers few other options.

Among young men the greatest health risks are linked to the violence that visits their neighborhood in the forays through Lower Price Hill by gangs of more affluent whites from "the hill." Program participants spoke of two or three age-mates from the neighborhood who had been "wasted" in gang-related activity, although vigorously denying (see page

35-36) the presence of gangs from the neighborhood.

In sum, work- and health-related issues may predispose young, urban Appalachian children to perform less well in school. However, school-related factors also inhibit their success. Both the structure of schooling and the relationship of the school to the broader community must also be considered in any analysis of children's school-related difficulties.

Community Life and Educational Issues

In describing the dilemmas of community life for residents and particularly for children and their families who live in Cincinnati's urban Appalachian neighborhoods, I will examine the dilemmas of urban Appalachian children, youths, and their families. I turn attention first to how young elementary school children negotiate neighborhood life. Next, I consider how older urban Appalachian youths and their families manage the "welfare game." I also present accounts of neighborhood life focusing on the availability and use of drugs, particularly alcohol. These accounts have implications for both educational policy and social service policies more generally.

I also examine the sense of alienation experienced by many Appalachian students and their parents. While parents clearly attach importance to their children's achieving success in school, they are ambivalent about encouraging

behaviors that traditionally have supported academic success. Finally, I conclude by suggesting structures for the delivery of social services and other outreach programs to urban Appalachian youth.

I rely on several sources of information: (1) past and current research in enclaved urban Appalachian neighborhoods, (2) interviews with an adult first generation urban Appalachian, Larry Redden, who has successfully negotiated the system, (3) interviews with adolescent urban Appalachians currently involved in a neighborhood-based summer job skills training program, and (4) interviews with Susan Murphy, teacher of urban Appalachian children for most of her career.

Growing Up As An Urban Appalachian: Negotiating The Neighborhood In The Elementary School Years

Life in predominantly urban Appalachian neighborhoods varies according to the economic prosperity enjoyed by neighborhood residents. In neighborhoods such as Over-The-Rhine, Lower Price Hill, and The East End in Cincinnati households face severe economic constraints that place a ceiling on the amount of resources the family can utilize on their children's behalf.

Lower Price Hill's residents have settled in the neighborhood over a period of 25 to 30 years, migrating in a clearly identifiable, coherent, and consistent stream from

eastern Kentucky coal fields in a manner similar to patterns characterizing nearly all urban Appalachian communities. Close kin tended to move to the same location in the city and subsequently provided shelter, support and access to jobs for kin arriving later. Among a group of 24 parents living in Lower Price Hill one named 30 relatives living in the neighborhood.[16] Only one respondent had no relatives living close by; most had seven or more. As a result of settlement patterns and subsequent sustained interactions, children in Lower Price Hill grow up in a context of familial ties, similar to those that bound Jack to his family and made his transition to work in the bakery outside his neighborhood so difficult for him at age 18.

Contributing to the close integration and sense of isolation from the rest of the city is the neighborhood's topography. Observers regularly characterize Lower Price Hill as an urban "holler." Lower Price Hill's geography makes it an enclaved community since a steep, unpopulated hill encloses it to the north and highways, major thoroughfares, and a viaduct spanning the Mill Creek Valley surround it in other directions. Because the community has natural boundaries, children in Lower Price Hill develop a clear sense of their community. When a group of ten children (ages 7 to 14) and their parents were asked to provide an outline of their neighborhood on a city street map, children responded by drawing a more circumscribed

space than that drawn by their parents. All children agreed upon a core space that included frequently used social spaces such as the elementary school and surrounding yard, the Bible Center, a social service agency housing a community council meeting room, the locally controlled community school, and other offices accessible to the neighborhood.

Elaine Mueninghoff, Shirley Piazza, and I also investigated children's use of neighborhood social services to gain an understanding of their involvement in neighborhood social life during the summer months when they were not in school. Three basic assumptions guided this research. First, children who spent recreational time outside their homes were seen as gaining important knowledge about patterns of social participation in community activities. Involvement in local activities apparently generates satisfaction with one's role in the community for adults. A second assumption was that children who were active participants in neighborhood life were building strongly positive feelings about their neighborhood. A third assumption, following from our knowledge of settlement patterns, was that kin groups and informal friendship networks were important in determining knowledge and use of community resources by neighborhood children and youth. Therefore, their involvement in neighborhood life would not only reflect children's perceptions of benefits from such

involvement but would also be highly dependent upon their integration into a network of neighborhood friendships and family relationships.

Several findings in this study bear comment. First, children have a working knowledge of their neighborhood and its resources given their responses to the boundary-drawing task mentioned above.

Second, by the age of seven children develop generally positive and strongly felt emotions about their neighborhood. In response to the question, "If you had to explain to someone where you lived, what would you say?" the youngest respondent replied, "I live over there [pointing across the street] where my cousins live." A slightly older [aged eight] child responded, "Here, the school yard by Oyler School, my house and my friends'." A 12-year-old said, "To me it's the only community I've ever lived in. It's my life."

Finally, children learn of ongoing activities in the neighborhood by word of mouth. Many informal activities, street games, and the like are undertaken by children who live in the same buildings and spontaneously gather after lunch or in the evenings on street corners or playgrounds. Other activities such as events at the Bible Center are more regularized since they are scheduled at specific times. A 13-year-old newcomer to the neighborhood was representative in naming the Bible Center, open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 2

p.m. as the primary social center for children. "I met a kid down the street who brought me up here [to the Center]. So far, I've been here--two weeks--I like to play ping pong."

The Bible Center's attractiveness was based on two features, both important to an understanding of political socialization in the neighborhood. First, the supervisor was a local resident, the 18-year-old daughter of a prominent, civically active neighborhood family who provided activities appealing to children of an extensive age range. Although the local social service agency paid her salary, her family donated the pool table and ping-pong equipment that older children used. Art supplies were also available for the projects of younger children. Second, since the facility was located in the geographical center of the neighborhood, it served as a convenient place to meet other children.

In summary, children in the enclaved neighborhood investigated in this study were informed by their working knowledge of local geography and by word-of-mouth-information and made use of neighborhood resources. Social services formally provided for them are particularly favored but are most popular when supervision is locally-based. These findings have direct application to policies aimed at eliminating traditional patterns of school organization which are bureaucratic and centralized as opposed to site-

based.

Social scientists have demonstrated that the school performance of low-income children is associated with such family related variables as child-rearing practices, family structure, and socio-economic status (SES). However, too little is known of patterned variations in the interrelationships of these variables. Cultural analyses providing descriptions of both ethnic group variations and within-group differences are needed.

In order to understand cultural continuities and discontinuities between home and school, I and my colleagues, under the rubric of the Center for Research on Literacy and Schooling, explored family and school linkages in two inner-city low-income communities. One of the communities (the East End) included many families who are third and fourth generation migrants from the Appalachian Region. The study examined patterns of relationships between home factors and student school achievement. We especially focused on understanding family literacy activities, parent discipline practices, and parent participation in school events in relation to student outcomes.

River Road Elementary School serves a neighborhood comprised overwhelmingly of white urban Appalachian families. A total of 2,815 such individuals as compared to 407 blacks live in the two census tracts comprising the East

End neighborhood. Most parents (76.8 percent) interviewed during the course of the research grew up in Cincinnati and a majority (52.9 percent) own their own homes.

Earlier research with low-income families has investigated aspects of the relationship between home environments and children's school achievements. Findings vary considerably, attributing family attitudes and relationships, household structure, parental aspirations, and parenting styles to differences in student achievement. In addition to standard SES measures, we utilized four sets of family-related variables to analyze household influences. The four are family literacy activities, parent discipline practices, parent school participation, and household composition.

I first describe related research in documenting findings on the relationship between family literacy activities and school success. Activities such as storybook reading, and experimenting with writing have been identified as providing young children with school-related knowledge that prepares them for the transition to formal education. For example, Dahl (1989)[17] found that inner-city children who had more knowledge of written language were more successful at learning to read and write in a traditional public school kindergarten classroom. In a study of low-income Latino families, Reese, et al. (1989)[18] concluded that, "the impact of parents' educational experiences on

children is mediated through particular activity settings, such as the use of literacy in the workplace, the modeling of literacy behaviors at home, the viewing of incipient child literacy attempts in a positive and encouraging light, and the scaffolding of children's learning experiences" (p. 20). Thus, considering parental educational level, household structure, or any other individual or set of family characteristics by themselves is insufficient.

Studies of the influence of household composition on school achievement concluded that mother aloneness may be more important than father absence in predicting poor adjustment to school (Kellam, et al. 1977).[19] The presence of a second adult has beneficial effects on reading marks. What is important in understanding children's literacy learning is <u>how</u> parents and other adults in the household structure, organize and carry out reading and related activities with their children.

The relationship between parents' involvement in their children's schooling and children's subsequent academic success is vitally important. Clark (1983)[20] found that parents of low achievers avoided school contacts, while the parents of high achieving students were assertive in their efforts to get information about their children's progress. While every recent report on effective schools has indicated that meaningful parent participation is essential for school success, the evidence suggests that schools which serve low-

income students have been least effective in involving parents in the education of their children (Henderson, 1987).[21]

In considering the relationship between family characteristics and student outcomes, it is important that several considerations be kept in mind. First, not all family characteristics may be equally important in influencing children's school-related achievements. Literacy activities such as reading aloud to children or engaging in writing activities such as carrying out correspondence with absent kin may be more influential than, say, parental disciplinary styles. Second, family literacy activities vary and may be dependent on cultural variations. These variations are important in providing cultural maps of communities. These maps are useful to teachers in performing their instructional routines in teaching reading and writing. Finally, cultural variations such as these evident in families and communities should be viewed as resources rather than deficits.

While our findings suggest that school and family alike value and practice such literacy activities as reading aloud, other family practices may not be recognized and valued. This may further alienate children who are most vulnerable to school failure. In fact, the most striking observation yielded by our research was the strength of the relationships between family income and parental education

with home-based literacy activities, such as having library books in the home, saving children's writing, playing board games with children, and reading to and being read to by children. These findings contrasted with the relatively weak relationship between family literacy events and school outcomes such as reading grades and achievement test scores.

Growing Up as an Urban Appalachian: "Handling it Myself" in Adolescence

In extremely dysfunctional families, ambivalence about schooling is reduced to indifference simply because the family's immediate needs are so overwhelming. Susan Murphy, the Cincinnati Public School teacher, whose statement about urban Appalachian mothers and their sons began this paper, observed that the transition from the interdependence of family members that characterizes life in rural Appalachia is not necessarily present in the urban Appalachian context.[22]

Susan described the mothers of her fourth and fifth grade students, boys who were having difficulty in school and who had been assigned to her special education class designed for student with severe behavioral disorders in the following way:

> All of these women, I remember very vividly and exactly what they looked like. They were real open and, like their sons, were easy to get close to, but

> [they were] overwhelmed. [They were]...deeply caring but [they] did not know what to do for the kids. They had no control...could not make them come in at night...could not make them go to bed...could not make them get up and come to school. The sons were more or less running their own show. The mothers had lost control which is a big problem when one of the kids gets in trouble with the law. [The mothers] could parent the younger ones, but once...[their sons] grew up, what could...[the mothers] do with somebody they considered to be on the same level?
>
> Up here it's like...[the mothers] are alone without their network or else the network is in the same shape...there were often a lot of kids which would mean the parenting network is sort of overwhelmed. Young mothers having babies in the rural areas is not as complicated as all these young mothers having babies in this complicated city.

Susan Murphy's observations on strained family networks and the difficulties facing young mothers in the city underscore the issues that face both the young mother and the child for whom inadequate family resources create an uncertain future. In a previous section of this paper I pointed out that urban Appalachians constitute the largest group of students (in proportion to their numbers) who leave school in Cincinnati before graduation. For young women,

school leaving is most often associated with pregnancy as mentioned previously.

Street Life and Welfare

School leaving for boys and young men is connected with what one survivor of that life style, Larry Redden, calls "living on the streets" or "handling it myself." He grew up on the streets and survived to return as a youth worker. Describing his early experience, he contrasts his opportunities with the limited supports available to youths today and the activities of young people with a particular emphasis on street culture and behavior. Larry, a first generation urban Appalachian recalls that his move to the streets had it origins in the necessity of his family's playing the welfare game. His family's experiences are not atypical and illustrate a number of important points, namely, the strategies, the life stresses, and the resilience of these individuals.

> Growing up with family that came from the eastern part of Kentucky and the West Virginia area, my first house was approximately at 328 Third Street down in the bottoms. The bottoms were the houses on stilts so the flood waters wouldn't get in. When I was born my mother was on welfare which caused a problem. She had my older sister with her but at that point in time being on welfare you weren't supposed to

> have a man in your life and no kind of man was supposed to be even around or else you could get kicked off welfare. That created a problem for my mother when she was pregnant because once she went to the hospital she would have been cut off welfare because of being with a man. And that was certainly proof that she had been with a man within the last nine months. When she went to the hospital she used a fictitious name. She took her middle name, took my father's name and cut off the last letters and added others which made her be Louise Redding. My father did the same so when I was born, I was born as Larry James Redding instead of Redden. My mother said other people did that and that she got the idea from a friend of hers.

Winning the welfare game required the kind of resourcefulness that prompted Larry's mother to give Larry a fictitious surname at birth. Keeping the family afloat economically as Larry grew up required that the family frequently relocate to more affordable housing. These relocations of the household meant that Larry frequently changed schools. As he points out in the narrative below, Larry had attended five different elementary schools, yet managed to earn high grades.

> From the bottoms we moved to Riverside which was in a house that was really close to the [Ohio] River and every year we used to be flooded out. My mother

was still living on welfare. Then we moved into Laurel Homes because in a sense it was like subsidized housing back in the early 50s. I went to Washburn School. We moved to Vine Street which was basically Over-the-Rhine and from about age six, that was where I grew up. That's the beginning--my kind of life living on welfare. Between the ages of six and seven I went to five different schools. The remarkable thing is that I did very well. I was a straight A student and very rarely ever got a B. When I transferred to junior high, I started failing. That was at the same time when I started living on my own. I was almost twelve and I was out on the streets on my own. The reason for that was that we were sitting in the house on Vine Street and a welfare worker came in without knocking. She just opened the door and we had a television, a little Philco TV that my uncle had given us because we didn't have a radio or TV or anything in the house. At that point in time you weren't allowed to have what they called 'luxuries' in the house or you would be thrown off welfare.

Playing the welfare game means that families must successfully adapt to a system of survival that from both folk and bureaucratic perspectives are highly stressful. Strains on the family become wrenching when government policies force families to break apart as happened in

Larry's case. His family, fortunately, had a community network to rely upon:

> It took my mother three to six months to get back on welfare. It split the family up and I went out on the streets. That's where the other people come in--the community mothers--because once...[my friend's family] found out...[his mom] sort of adopted me. I would go there when it was really necessary, when I'd had enough out on the streets and I couldn't stand one more day of living under a stairwell or somewhere like that. There I could get cleaned up, change clothes, and get something to eat. Sometimes I'd stay two to three weeks at a time. But I always felt as if I was intruding and taking advantage. This lady never really made any attempt to make me feel that I was taking advantage. Today, her son is my best friend and was my best friend then.

As is the case in neighborhoods where strong kin and fictive kin ties are strong, Larry found a home with a family to whom he remains close as an adult. Although this strategy "worked" for Larry, it, without question, caused considerable stress and pain. The conflict between staying in school and providing for his own economic support exacted feelings of guilt and shame.

> While I stayed with...[my friend's family], I would attempt to go to school and I would do real good. When

I got to feeling guilty and get back out on my own, I'd leave school because I sold newspapers from the time I got up until the time I went to bed. I attempted to go to school between that but it didn't work. I'd lay my head down on the desk and the teacher would yell at me about getting enough sleep at home and I wasn't about to tell her I was out on the streets, that I hadn't been eating or whatever. That just wasn't any of their business.

When I asked Larry if conditions had changed for the third and fourth generation urban Appalachian boys and young men coming up in the 1990s, he said:

It's more difficult for them. As a young man coming in with the work ethic background of our culture, I could get out there and work, and the neighborhood that I lived in was an Appalachian neighborhood. That neighborhood provided the work for me. The grocery stores, people on the street had me to run back and forth to do odd jobs, etc. Even though they didn't have much, knowing who I was, there was always someone who would allow me to come in and pay me a quarter for doing this or that. Although that goes on today in a smaller community sometimes because neighborhood people see that kind of kid out there, the stores don't offer the jobs the way they used to. I could sweep a cellar and make fifty cents. Today they don't do that sort of

thing. I had newspapers to fall back on, the Times-Star, the Post, and the Enquirer and I sold all three. I also set pins at the bowling alley. They no longer have those sorts of jobs for kids to do, so it's harder for a kid to find employment. They make their money in other ways, sometimes through dope, sometimes through robbery and whatever way they can. Sometimes it's on the up-and-up if they're over 16. If you're 12, 13 or 14 it's pretty difficult. It was easy for me because I was a hustler--I got out there and looked.

Not only are there fewer economic opportunities for young men in the central city, but there are also fewer programs and services. Those that do exist to address the needs of young urban Appalachians who are on the street have become more bureaucratic, less able to directly address the needs of their "clients."

Larry made the following observations on service provision differences:

There are far less programs available. I didn't even bring in my involvement with the YMCA and the Emanuel Community Center, my involvement with Turner's Gym and the Boy's Club. If it wasn't for those kinds of programs, I would have gone hungry. I could go in and work with those people in charge and run errands and kids could go in and get a little extra. You don't have that sort of thing now. It just isn't out there.

> The outreach is really, really difficult because programs aren't set up that way anymore. Even the [UAC] Urban Appalachian Council is not set up to allow a person to go out and do what is necessary to get personally involved with a youngster as Ernie [Mynatt] was able to. We work with people but we don't reach the ones with the greatest need and there's no program set up for that. The programs don't allow us to be able to take that kind of time.

An added complication in delivering service to Urban Appalachians who are predominantly white is that federal program guidelines often target specific populations. Generally, these guidelines do not recognize urban Appalachians as a qualified group. An exception is the Summer Youth Program for youths who live in Lower Price Hill and adjacent neighborhoods. During the summer of 1991 I undertook a series of interviews at the program site in Lower Price Hill with participants, meeting separately with boys and girls. Ages of program participants ranged from 15 to 19. There were eight boys in the male work crew and five girls in the female work crew. Our conversation ranged over the topics of neighborhood life, peers and adolescent peer culture, and school. The major themes that emerged from our conversations centered on the notion of neighborhood as an enclave and the school as an alien and threatening structure.

I also draw upon the views of Larry Redden, Fred, and Betsy, first generation urban Appalachians, and also community-based youth advocates.

Perspectives on the Neighborhood: Gangs, Drugs

Both boys and girls saw life in the neighborhood as dangerous and at the same time boring. The boys talked about gangs of more affluent white youths from Price Hill and elsewhere who came into the neighborhood, particularly on the weekends. Gangs with colorful names like Miami Vice, C-town, Cincy Boys, and the Mod Squad operate by a "policy" designed to terrify those they encounter. The Youth Program leader, Betsy, a long-term resident of Lower Price Hill and parent of one of the boys, said of the gangs,

> Their policy is to find you by yourself and beat the shit out of you. They never fight one-on-one. They keep the odds on their side. They use guns, Mace, you name it, they got it.

Gang membership is not seen as attractive by Lower Price Hill youths; nonetheless, two of the boys wearing western style kerchiefs declared amidst much hooting that they were the "bandana bastards." Although gang activity centers around cars (as opposed to motorcycles) and is motivated by claims on girls living in the neighborhood, both of which interest male Youth Program participants, gang membership was shunned primarily for three reasons: (1)

"They're always fighting" (Mike), (2) "They want to be black" (Dave), and (3) "You don't need a gang down here to be supported" (Betsy).

The youths saw the neighborhood as an extension of the family as supportive and more negatively, as inhibiting the use of drugs despite their widespread availability. One member of the group, Dave, claimed that parents themselves were the major users and abusers of drugs, particularly marijuana.

K. Borman: What drugs are available on the streets?

Dave: Hardly none at all.

Mike: See, really, it's hard to get anything in this neighborhood because of the parents.

Betsy: Everybody knows everybody's kids. You're not going to give somebody else's kids shit unless you want trouble.

Dave: [That's]...A lot of bull--money talks; bullshit walks. The kids are scared their parents will find out and they will find out. Most of the kids are not hooked on pot and drugs--it's the parents. The kids use mostly wine coolers.

Although these youths claim that drug use is virtually nonexistent, some spoke quite knowledgeably about the price, quality and sources of marijuana and also spoke of the availability of "pills" and amphetamines in the neighborhood. The availability of "downers" was attributed

to the presence of the public health clinic in the neighborhood. Clinic staff were viewed as carelessly dispensing drugs into the community. Nonetheless, drinking is the most widespread abusive activity among these youths. Larry Redden said about the harder stuff: "Crack is virtually no more. It's gone." While still available in African-American neighborhoods, it is rejected by these kids who see it as part of a "black style" they do not find attractive.

Among the girls, being on the streets with the guys is a source of entertainment and fun, although such behavior also exposes them to gang violence, drinking, and drug use. However, these girls spoke of avoiding or being protected from involvement with drugs and alcohol by concerned parents and other adults in the neighborhood, often to their frustration. One of the girls talked about her "experience with drug use" as she called it:

> I had an experience with drug use. I mean, it was--I did it last year--well, when I was doing my senior year. I snuck away with some friend of mine up the street. I mean, we'd sit right there in front of the bar and some guy...said you don't want to mess up right now--talking to me...[that way] since it was my senior year. He said if he saw me doing it again he'd go tell my parents. And then, one of my other friends told me to come down here and talk to Fred and he gave me this

long lecture.

As young women, the sense was that they were more severely restricted in their behavior by parents anxious that their daughters avoid early pregnancy. In comparing herself to her brother, Bonnie remarked,

> ...my father is harder on me than on my brother. I mean, I can see why because he doesn't want me to go out there--me being a girl--I mean you see all these girls doing the same thing. Someone's 14 with a baby. He doesn't want me to end up like that. So, I'm living with a man who doesn't want me to mess up.

Parental strategies that aim at sequestering young women are, of course, not limited to urban Appalachian families. Such strategies are prevalent in paternalistic ethnic cultures. While these strategies are, perhaps, effective in the short run, they can deprive young women of opportunities (1) to participate in community life, (2) to have experiences that prepare them for adulthood, and (3) to adopt an active, less passive orientation to life. A striking aspect of my conversation with these young women was the emphasis they placed on their role as companions to boys who initiated fights, drinking bouts, and other street action while they simply went along for the ride as passive observers.

Drug and alcohol use spill over into school. Kids who smoke marijuana persist in school if they "focus their mind

on school" and use pot only occasionally. Pouring beer or whiskey into coke bottles and slipping it into school was reported by the girls. This was an activity undertaken by "a whole bunch of guys" and not by the girls according to the girls.

The School Situation

The major threat to their persistence in school, according to Summer Program participants, was a set of related issues connected with the social organization and climate of the high school attended by most of both the young men and young women. This includes school practices such as busing and the curricular emphasis on black culture, as well as the involvement of the criminal justice system in the school, all of which lead to discord, inequities, and alienation. Taft High School is overwhelmingly black and located in a low-income black neighborhood. Lower Price Hill students are bused to school in what is surely a paradoxical turn of events when one considers earlier national concerns about busing black students from their low-income neighborhoods to attend schools in white middle-class communities as was the case in the late 1960s in Berkeley or in white working-class neighborhoods in Boston during the 1970s.

Both the boys and the girls look back nostalgically to the time in their elementary school years when they attended

school in their own neighborhood and wonder why they are no longer able to attend the predominately white high school up the hill that many of their uncles and cousins had attended. One of the young men, Roy, was enrolled in an alternative school outside the neighborhood. He saw this school as both allowing him to gain experience in the world outside his neighborhood and as providing access to job skills he needed to succeed in life. However, most agreed with Joe who said,

> You don't feel right when it's a black culture, black this and that but never Appalachian this or that. It's not that we care about that, but we don't feel right when we go to assembly and its all about blacks and you feel out of place.

Dave agreed:

> ...there would be less dropouts in this neighborhood and more success if we could go to high school here.

Mike, who had graduated from the unique program offered by the Inland Waterways Academy, a public school alternative program, expressed another view. In fact, he was troubled by his peers' desire for what amounted to "a return to segregation." Before enrolling in the program Mike had gotten into trouble at Taft and was skipping classes. This stopped when he began to attend the Academy.

> That school was different because it was...it balanced out even...[racially]. The classes were small, and the teacher had time to give everyone the

> special attention they needed and help you with your stuff and teach you and you could see what you could do.

Mike's success in the Waterways program hinged on both the racially balanced nature of the student population and the active engagement inherent in the curriculum of the Academy. Being able as a student to "see what you could do" is possible in a program with a limited enrollment that focuses upon a specific set of skills and that allows participants to apply those skills in the actual work environment in which they are required as is the case in the Inland Waterways school program.

Changing the schools to build on the skills and interests of these urban Appalachian boys will require making schools more personal, creating greater access to sports, fostering participation in hands-on training, and ideally, placing the school in the neighborhood where these students live. Mike stated it well:

> One thing I don't like about school is that they have to send us downtown instead of us going in our own neighborhood. It's harder for us to play sports and really get into school and you hardly ever see any white people. They say it's 70-30 but it's really like 90-10. I don't have anything against black people, but it's mostly different cultures, you know, and you don't really fit in and that's why a lot of people skip

> school, quit, don't play sports, waste their time and don't even try because they're going to a whole different, you know, background and that's the reason why alot of people mess up".

For the girls a set of similar issues exist, although girls did not spontaneously mention skill learning or the academic side of school. The major issue for them is being taken from the neighborhood. This is particularly difficult for the girls because they feel their safety is threatened, and, once their fear, usually expressed as anger is provoked, it is responded to punitively by school authorities. One of the girls, Stephanie, a Naval recruit about to leave for Orlando to attend bootcamp, talked about fights that frequently broke out between black and white girls and in which she herself had been involved. As a result, Stephanie had been arrested and taken into custody!

> I had a couple of charges that were real bad. I had am assault charge--that was the first offense. Then I had a criminal trespassing [charge]...third degree. ...See, the girl hit me first. She hit me in the face with her purse that had a rock in it. So I hit her back. Newland called the judge and he was...he dropped me back to disorderly conduct and threw the criminal trespass out.

Increasingly in both African-American and white communities, parents and children are expressing the desire

to attend schools that address issues and needs that are particularly pressing for these groups. Detroit's effort to establish an academy for African-American boys and young men is one such example. These school programs run the risk of being challenged on the grounds that particular groups cannot be excluded by law.

In the case of these white urban Appalachian girls and boys, the concern about their school experience in large part is centered on issues of equality and fairness--"She was an equal person," one of the girls said about a well liked and respected black English teacher at Taft. These youths feel overwhelmed by conditions in schools that place them among a very small minority of students resulting in their alienation and isolation.

In summary, three themes emerged in my interviews with these youths. The first is the sense of the neighborhood as a supportive, sometimes overly protective network of family and near-kin. Second is the enclaved and even fortress-like character of the neighborhood that is constructed by the youths against the white gang hill culture and the black culture of the flats, neighborhoods adjacent to Lower Price Hill. Third is the characterization of high school as dominated by a black culture and a threatening penal system hostile to these low-income white urban Appalachians. These three themes have implications for educational and social service policy and delivery systems that address the needs

of urban Appalachians.

Conclusion

As a social worker serving the urban Appalachian community today, Larry Redden sees both the possibilities and constraints inherent in current social service policies: "In our city today, we've got maybe a thousand...[social service] agencies and organizations in the network and the targeted population is the black community." This situation is a far different one than Larry experienced growing up: "Then, it seemed like everyone fell short of having that sort of service. There weren't any services for anyone then, so we made do with what we had. Today, society offers programs but it puts constraints on them as to who will be eligible." Federally funded programs do not target urban Appalachians who are generally not recognized as a minority group according to federal guidelines.

While such individual characteristics as early pregnancy, employment discrimination, and other health-related issues may contribute to early school leaving, a clear relationship exists between school leaving, truancy, and failure, and such school-related features as high rates of student suspension, low overall reading achievement and high rates of absenteeism. Even though urban Appalachian children may leave school, education and learning have great importance to most of them. They are concerned about racial

equality and opportunities for both blacks and whites. Moreover, families value the skills learned in school and see them as essential both for carrying out a number of tasks and also for finding a job as an adult.

In considering reforms and policy shifts appropriate for urban Appalachian youths and their families, I put forward suggestions derived from my conversations with people such as Larry Redden who are based in the community and who have survived by beating the odds and skillfully negotiating the system. Two major problems persist in current service delivery: (1) overlapping services put forward in the community by bureaucracies almost impossible to negotiate, (2) little effort to target problems peculiar to urban Appalachian or to recognize Appalachians as a group eligible for services. In putting forward strategies for changing services and service delivery, Larry offered three suggestions:

> That communities...city government get more in tune with lifestyles and the people that make up those communities and serve those communities based on the needs and the expectations of the community. That's number one.
>
> Number two would be to take more practical approaches to providing services to people and stop making people think that more money is the answer.
>
> Number three would be to allow a case worker to do

> what is necessary to get personally involved with a youngster as Ernie was able to do. Ernie had full control over what he did and if he'd wanted to stay at home all day, he could have stayed at home. Or, he sat out on the street where the kids came to him and he got personally involved that way. With the funding restraints and all, the paperwork has to be done and certain things have to be done and so many clients have to be seen. I honestly believe that Ernie's way was more effective. We work with people, but we don't reach the ones with the greatest need and there's no program set up for that. The programs don't allow us to be able to take that kind of time.

In summary, according to the community-based social service provider, social service delivery systems should address people's needs in their neighborhoods in a way that emphasizes personal attention and practical applications.

In thinking about schools, Larry noted that the schools have become more cynical:

> The community pays attention to the minority group that's the established minority group. The Board of Education...even though they realize there is another sub-minority group or whatever you call it, out there with the problems just as large, it's still invisible and not really anything is happening. In our city today, we've got maybe a thousand agencies and

organizations in the network and the targeted population is the black community.

A proliferation of agencies with overlapping functions is an acknowledged problem in all urban centers. Indeed, the United Way nationally has begun efforts to consolidate and coordinate social service delivery. Larry spoke of his vision for improving the system:

> Like any other social worker that's going to be here for a long time, I've got the perfect answer. But it makes too much sense and for that reason, it probably wouldn't be considered. Bureaucracies tend to establish themselves in making things as difficult as possible. They pride themselves on that by making it so difficult you don't even know what they're doing. It's really incumbent when a person goes for a service at a certain place and get herded to another place and so on. What you need is a multi-purpose center within the communities themselves. We've got 48-49 communities in the city and we need multi-purpose centers that serve each and every one of those communities doing the same kind of things for each and every one of them. We've got the facilities for which to do that.

Larry's plan is simple. He believes that neighborhood-based services centrally located in the targeted community and housed in the neighborhood school hold the promise for

service delivery and responsibility to the community currently lacking in the highly bureaucratized and overlapping social service delivery system. The school is a perfect locale for these services.

> In each community, there's a school building. During the winter, school goes from 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. After the afternoon is over, social services could take over. The people of that community could use that school as their center which all activity would flow around. You could have your counselors, social workers, and recreation people in each one. It would eliminate the necessity of building all these other big buildings for that kind of thing to happen. It would put all the building costs and extras back into people power. You've got people out there working with people one-on one. The people would be in the community so they could get to know where the problems are and get to know who the kids are, who the adults are, where the problems are and they could have their hands on full time. This could happen year-round. In the summer time, the school would open as a multi-purpose center. Almost every high school in the city has a swimming pool. You would eliminate the necessity of having a swimming pool in the parks. Everything is all mixed up the way it is now. It could all be combined. The community council could have community

input because the councils could work out of this school, your volunteers could set up by triggering programs. If they stop and think about it they could do almost anything they wanted. It's right there on the spot in the community and it can be controlled.

Present arrangements for such service delivery are perhaps best seen in the operation of the parochial school according to Larry. This is because parochial schools are directly rooted in and tend to be responsive to the local community.

There's a structure there that helps because people feel that they own that structure. It's their school, their church, their whole everything. You have poor people in those schools too. Once people can get together, they can help themselves and work on those kinds of things. That's the closest you can come to it now and it could be done better. Rather than the City funding that money to a special recreation program which has its administration, they'd just have one administration to do the hiring of people for certain areas. You'd be cutting budgets down, cutting everything. The public school system doesn't have to pay double for heating, and the like...and they would be saving money. It could work.

You have people out there who like to do funding and you could have those people work on that for the

school. In each school, you've got an auditorium so they could put on community plays, events, and so on. But, unfortunately, you've got bureaucracy.

Larry's observations make sense for the organization and delivery of social services. As he somewhat cynically noted, this is why his ideas might never be operationalized. Nonetheless, the notion of a multipurpose "agency" located in the neighborhood school might prove a workable scheme. However, his ideas do not address two persistent difficulties for urban Appalachian children and youth who are at-risk, namely their more general isolation from opportunities to gain positive work and related experience outside their enclaved neighborhoods and alienating them from their overwhelmingly black school.

These urban Appalachian young people can all too readily be dismissed as lacking in ambition (as in the cases of Jack and several Youth Program participants) and as racist. Clearly, their constrained socioeconomic circumstances are the major contributing factor to their marginalized status. Locally-based agencies must have connections with other neighborhoods facilitated, perhaps by a network or council of such social service delivery centers.

Currently in the United States reformers are stressing the value of creating schools characterized by (1) school site-based management, (2) community participation in

decisions both about hiring and firing principals and teachers, and in developing the curriculum, and (3) school site-based staff and community development programs. These strategies are aimed at fostering the active involvement of teachers, parents and students, all of whom have traditionally been least enfranchised to determine the nature of educational structures and experiences in schools. To envision the kind of community-based social service operation that Ernie describes is to consider a plan that school reformers, social service planners, and the architects of Bush's AMERICA 2000 alike have been urging us to put in place. It is also to recall the model of the settlement house exemplified in June Addams' Hull House in late 19th century Chicago. Whether plans for such service delivery systems will get the political backing they require for implementation is another question. How these plans might also take into account the reduction the alienation and isolation of urban Appalachian youths from mainstream experiences will also require careful thought.
Historically, the invisible minority has not easily gained access to the services it needs and deserves.

Notes and References

* Portions of this report were presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Cincinnati, Ohio, August 23, 1991. I gratefully acknowledge the useful constructive comments on earlier drafts provided by Judith Lynne Hanna. Rhoda Halperin and Pat Timm also provided helpful comments. I am additionally indebted to Dale Wilburn for transcribing the interviews used here and for carefully preparing the manuscript.

1. As a fourteen-year resident in Cincinnati, I have spent considerable scholarly and personal time involved with the city's urban Appalachian population. The eclectic research methods used in documenting the information presented here reflect the varied roles I have assumed in my work with the community. I draw upon several sources:

   a. The local research and scholarship of the Urban Appalachian Council's Research and Education Committee and particularly of Phillip Obermiller and his colleagues.

   b. My own primarily ethnographic work in Lower Price Hill including Oyler School, the public elementary school located in the neighborhood.

   c. A series of interviews with individuals whose

social service roles place them in direct contact with urban Appalachian children and youth. These individuals include Ernie Mynatt, a founder of the Urban Appalachian Council and a dedicated street-level social worker in the urban Appalachian community for over thirty years; Larry Redden, a staff member of the Urban Appalachian Council, as a second generation urban Appalachian, whom Ernie mentored on the streets Susan Murphy, a teacher in the Cincinnati Public Schools at the elementary and high school levels for more than fifteen years.

d. Finally, my experience as an active member of the Urban Appalachian Council, a community-based outreach and advocacy organization on whose Executive Board I currently proudly serve as President and whose Executive Director is Maureen Sullivan.

2. Thomas E. Wagner. "Introduction," in Phillip Obermiller and William Philliber (eds.) Too Few Tomorrows, pp. 3-13. (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1987).

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are young and access to good jobs when they are older. As a final point in consideration of family and household data, Obermiller and Maloney note that many of the differences in overall household wages just noted are explained by the increased participation in 1989 of women in the labor force, 80 percent of whom are employed.

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